

# hallmarks



fall

2000

## ART WORK

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## DEATH

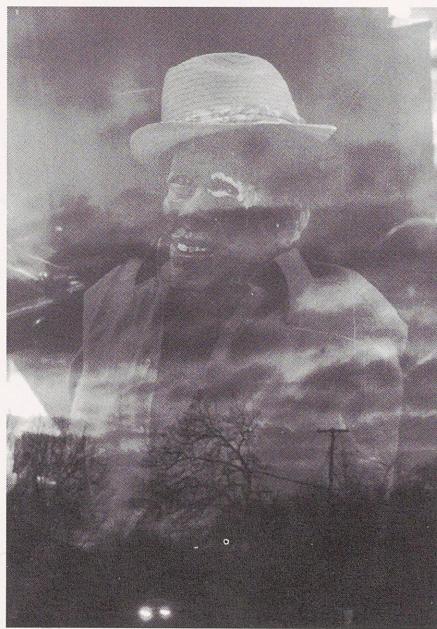
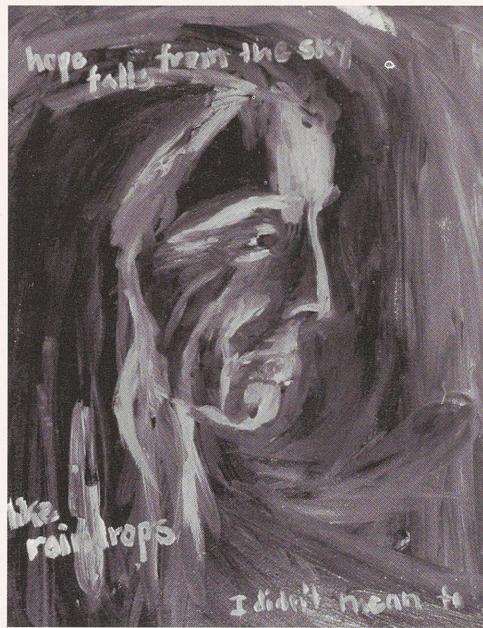
Silence,  
Except for the uneven breaths  
Of a person afraid.

Slowly it crept towards her,  
Covering all it passed in its seeping darkness.  
And she could hear it.  
She could feel it.  
Only she sensed it lingering in the shadows,  
Waiting to claim her shortening breaths.

The bright lights and bustling people  
Did nothing to dilute her darkness.  
It tiptoed into the corners of her mind,  
Slowly taking over.  
But she couldn't let it take her breath.

They all crowded around her,  
Talking to her,  
Pleading.  
But the light in their eyes was invisible to her,  
Because of the shadows  
Creeping up her body.  
Her feet, and legs  
Turned cold.  
Then her fingers.  
And arms were gripped by it.  
Then her eyes,  
And she breathed her last,  
And was gone.

LAUREN EZELL (10)



## pancakes: An Ode

Should I eat pancakes?  
Or should I try  
To make waffles on the fly?  
Oh the perplexion that is  
the enigma of breakfast food.  
If I made them would I smother  
Their buttery bodies in syrup  
With some cream or strawberries?  
Oh the perplexion that is  
my illusion of breakfast food.  
I can't lie  
I can't deny  
That in the end hashbrowns are  
My true blue friend.  
But should I eat those pancakes?  
Should I even try  
To prepare these round discs  
that if I burnt could then fly?  
Oh pancakes. The perplexion of the enigma of  
breakfast food.

THE END.

CARA HIMMELFARB (12)

## A VARIATION ON THE WORD "LAUGH" IN THE STYLE OF MARGARET ATWOOD'S "A VARIATION ON THE WORD ‘SLEEP’"

I would like to watch you laughing,  
Which is plausible.

I would like to laugh with you,  
To enter your laughter as its  
Loud, jolly chuckle hums in my ear.

And laugh with you until  
The sky breaks loose and empties  
It's secrets of shy giggles  
and boisterous cackles.

I would like to crack  
The silly joke  
The one-liner  
The punchline  
That sends you railing for hours.

I would like to watch tears  
Ease their way to your eyes  
And see your cheeks blush  
With amusement.

I would like to watch your head  
Fall back and lurch forward  
As laughter rocks your body.

I would like to watch your eyes  
Twinkle and blaze.  
I would like to be that tickled  
And that familiar.

LAURA CALLAWAY (111)

## final note

Rippling current  
tumble over me  
Nothing more  
than I will ever be  
Thinking maybe  
I should have turned back  
Hoping  
there is nothing that I lack  
Windy water  
take me by surprise  
Shear terror  
beats through my eyes  
Eagerness  
to go back to land  
Mindful now  
that they won't understand  
Somber shadows  
give me to the deep  
Here it is  
finale to my sleep

KATIE ATKINS (10)



Solitary rose  
Dusty and dead  
The leftover memoir  
Now blackened around the edges  
As old roses are  
And outside the sun sets  
Cloaked in purple  
Orange  
Pink  
As night sweeps over the land  
How quickly day  
Fades into night!  
How quickly the petals  
Droop over the side  
Of the crystal vase

Obituary  
Of a stranger  
Aged thirty-seven years  
She fell into the eternal sleep  
And withered  
All those years ago  
Her heart broken  
By some Prince Charming  
Who never showed up  
To break the charm  
The evil witch had spoken

And lying in a crystal coffin  
The beautiful rose  
Now wearily wilts  
The crimson tone  
Of her cheeks  
Gone forever  
And though most of the petals  
Have fallen from the shelf  
I cannot bear to take  
The vase down  
To clean it out  
The best I can do  
Is to gather the dropping petals  
And lay them in my potpourri box  
So they may fill  
My room with the perfume  
The smell of forgotten love

Claire Berry (8)

## My VERY Own Judy Fisk

She has a net in which she catches souls  
She caught mine  
And I got tangled up in her unconditional love  
I look into the crowded stands and our eyes meet at first glance  
Our souls are connected in some mysterious way  
After all, she is my very own Judy Fisk.  
Striving to be like her  
I hope one day I can give a little dirty faced girl the sweet coca cola kisses she gave me  
I hope one day I can hide in the darkness while a little dirty faced girl absorbs the spotlight  
She has a brush in which she paints the picture of life  
She painted mine  
And I became entranced with her warm words of encouragement  
And her "thumbs up" attitude on living life to its fullest  
After all, she is my very own Judy Fisk.  
Striving to be like her  
I hope one day I can tuck a little dirty faced girl into bed at night  
I hope one day I can make silly lullabies that make a little dirty faced girl smile and laugh  
I have grown a bit  
But when I tuck myself in bed and drift into a peaceful slumber  
I softly whisper  
"Thank you Lord, for bringing Heaven here on this very Earth"

NANCY SISK (91)



## BREATH TOWARDS DESTINY

I would like to watch you die  
Which I cannot  
I would do anything to die with you  
To exit this life as you breathe your first breath  
Of the new eternal life

And to hold your hand  
And feel with you that moment  
You live your entire life to experience  
That moment of pure bliss, eternal happiness, and awe  
To walk with you through golden gates  
Across glistening clouds  
Past golden angels  
Past glowing halos  
Past silky feathered wings  
Towards your final judgment  
I want to look into your softly worn eyes  
And see their childish excitement  
As you find that all you ever imagined has come true  
I want to be with you when your worst fear becomes  
Your greatest happiness  
I want to walk with you in your paradise  
And swim with you through fountains of youth  
To reunite with your long lost friends  
And to watch with you  
As our kids grow old  
Without us  
I want to feel your tears upon my face  
As you overwhelm with joy, fear, and pain  
I would love to do none other than this with you  
From now and through eternity

I would like to be that last breath of life  
That inhibits you for only a moment's time  
I would like to be that first breath of life  
Leading you towards your destiny

ABBY GALLAGHER (10)



## Bundled

Shrunken necks pull my eyebrows to my nose.  
One after another,  
various synthetics

(polypropylene and polartec)  
bulk around my waist  
in deep folds and lumps.

"Are you sure you'll be warm enough?  
I won't have you getting sick."

Worry knits Mom's brows.

I manage a muffled assent  
through a coarse wool scarf.

She turns from the basket of lonely mittens  
and separated pairs

with a bright smile and a pink stocking hat  
topped by a teal fuzzball.

"No, I won't wear that."

"Your ears will freeze off."

Mom reasoned

as if she had witnessed such events.

With a shake of my head,

I pull the scarf up around my ears—

an Arab's turban—

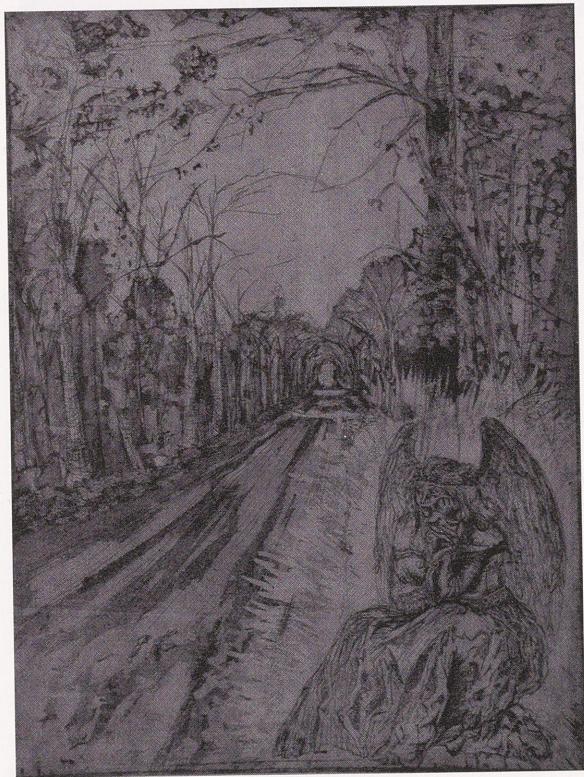
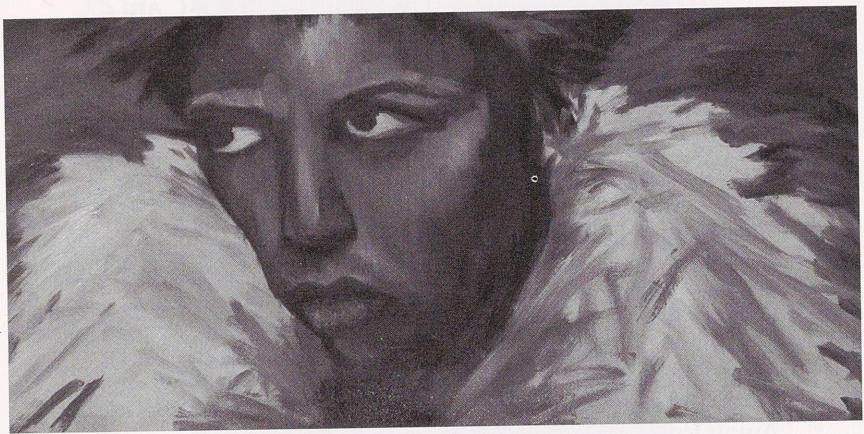
"There!"

and waddle out into rolling dunes of snow

chilled,

but not frozen.

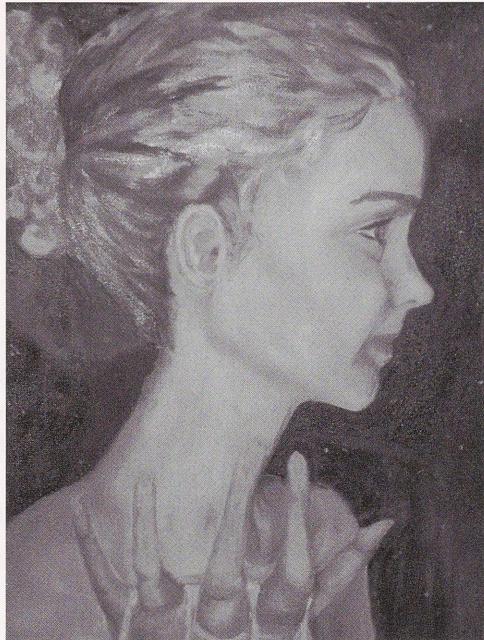
LAURALEE(10)



POCKET  
AFTER RICHARD TILLINGHAST'S "TABLE"

A little boy full of sadness and anger  
Stuffs his bubble gum wrapper in his jacket pocket,  
Puts beads on a string there.  
He puts his movie stubs and tickets in the jacket pocket.  
He put in there the screams from his parents bedroom  
Hiding them from the rest of the world.  
He put his money and loose change in the pocket.  
And then along with it put his fights with school kids.  
He put his dreams of another life in there  
So his parents didn't know  
That he wanted to get away.  
Away from the non existent love  
In there.  
He put in the jacket pocket his nightmares  
of what he would face the next day  
From the fist that made him so insecure  
That gave him those bruises and black eyes  
He put those in there.  
The pocket bulged  
And started crying because  
It had to hide such horrible things.

HUNTEY RODES (10)



### Summer Rain

The hot, sharp, sun beats heavily  
on the dry, dusty ground.  
As clouds roll in swiftly  
drawing dark shadows all around.

The lone tree welcomes the shade  
painted by bellowing clouds.  
Its sparse branches bend and sway  
and shake in excitement, as thunder roars  
aloud.

Streaks of lightning dance about,  
signaling the heavenly rains.  
The tree beneath, parched with drought,  
rejoices, relieved of its thirstful pain.

ABBY GALLAGHER (10)

## PERFECTION

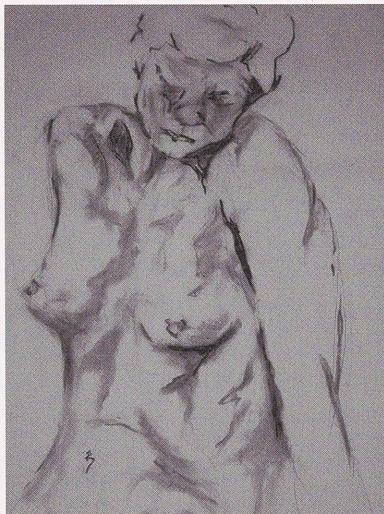
Girls in bikinis and slinky dresses battle  
Trying to prove they're the ideal  
Hoping to reign as Miss America  
The epitome of flawlessness

Unhappy expectants rejoice at the legalization  
Of a simple pill with the ability to rid  
Oneself of an unwanted fetus  
A nuisance in our suburban, 2.1 kids, 1 dog/cat society

A wealthy-crabby-90-year-old-wheelchair bound-alcoholic-lady  
Passes out pencils at her Christmas party  
Solidly pink with the event stamped on them in gold  
A piece of beauty in her unbeautiful life

The moon rises above the world  
With a little chunk missing  
Not as big, not as beautiful as the full moon  
Not perfect

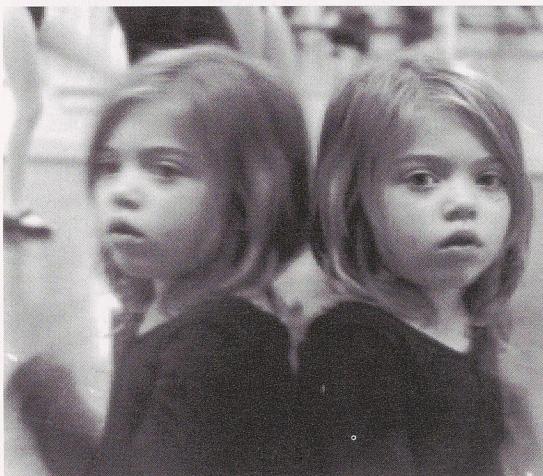
KATE GREGORY (8)



## TARZAN

Your constant prattle leaves me pathetic and cold,  
Only I gild my elated spirits,  
For I have no other choice.  
You rent my heart when your pills are not swallowed,  
And you make me feel obligated to care for you.  
You are a coward of your own disease!  
Like ten thousand tons resting on my weak shoulders,  
You weigh down my very existence,  
And make me question my place in this world.  
You so wild and free.  
You so depressed and confined.  
I scream, but you do not hear me.  
For you are out of this world,  
In a distant circus land.  
You wish to fly among acrobats on trapeze.  
But you wished in the wrong world of reality my friend.  
Yet the generous ground hit you softly,  
For you still live on.  
Thank God you still live on.

Nancy Sisk (9)



## SIDE WALK SORROW

No shoe

Just a foot

The back calf connects to a raw ankle

The grubby knee in front bends forward  
She may tumble over herself

Two legs;

One leads

One drags

The humped back

Complete with a saggy torso

On it, scraggly rags

The pockets of an old knit sweater  
Dangle by threads at her sides

Hands like stubs

One of them with three fingers

Two on the other

Grip a paper mug

The sickly arm leads

Up

To her head

Nose shifted

Slightly to the left

Making an angle

With her low cheek bone

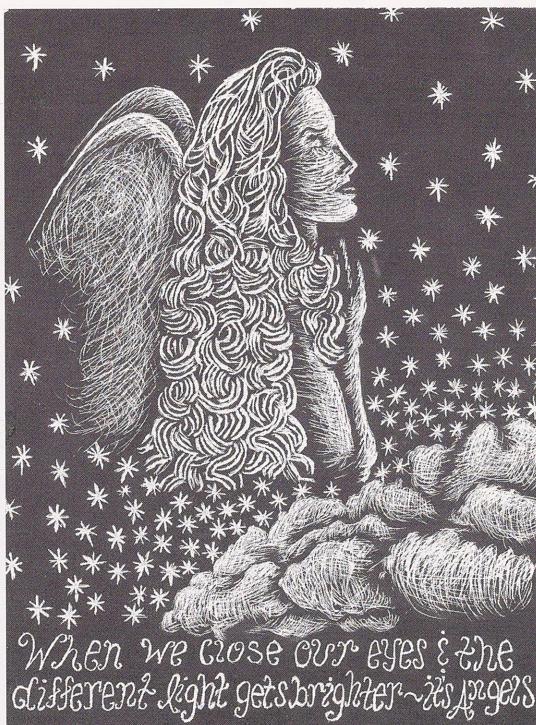
Uneven eyes  
Minute black dots  
That poke out between the thick wrinkles

The corners of her mouth  
Both pointing upward toward her cheeks

Cracked lips  
Separated by a distinct space  
In which three decaying teeth lie

Seeming to display  
A smile

KATIE ATKINS (10)



When we close our eyes & the  
different light gets brighter ~ it's Angels



A salty glaze covered my cheeks  
From the preceeding deluge of those unwanted  
drops of water  
Paving a path through powder  
Down the crease of my forced smile  
And landing in my trembling mouth

A turned back  
Folded arms  
(the pose that showed your anger boiling like brim-  
stone beneath your cool  
exterior)  
eyebrows knit into disapproving land forms,  
forehead wrinkled into hills of disfavor,  
and mouth pursed like a volcano preparing to spew  
forth its molten contents

how ironic  
that you who knows my mind so well  
who can feel my emotion in yourself  
are the one that hurts me the most.

Alice Fort (11)

## CHOCOLATE MILKSHAKES

Chocolate milkshakes  
taste like Saturday afternoons  
with my Papaw.

Thick and rich  
like the smell of his pipe  
but savorably different.

Cold and smooth  
as the benches where we sat  
enjoying our shakes.

Chocolate  
like the seats of his car  
in which he picked me up.

Size small  
like me because calories  
weren't a worry.

With a straw  
as always because it just tasted better  
that way.

Indescribable  
because the best things in life  
can't be defined.

ELIZABETH RAMSEY (12)

## WATER

You look at me and say "I see the ocean in your eyes."  
But all I know is everything around me is so dry.

Megumi Matsuda (12)



## A Memory...

Standing outside the local Lowes Home Improvement Warehouse, a wind of autumn, trying to sneak in, trickles past me and ruffles my moppy red hair. I clench the plastic sack I came for to protect the priceless industrial goods inside from being caught by the gust. Other targets were not so lucky. The leaves of one island tree in a concrete wasteland jump and scatter at the surprise and glide unwillingly to the pavement below. I watch them search frantically for a familiar place to stop and rest; a place where they can nestle between branches and blades of grass instead of broken beer bottles and empty cigarette boxes. But they can find no such place.

Three years ago they tore down my dream house. They tore it down and reassured my growing suspicions that the town I'd lived in my entire life was destined to become yet another commercialized suburban nightmare. I was glad to be at school the day they tore it down. I could never watch it just as I could never watch an ancient monarch be slain by the youthful, modern heir. The power tool, light fixture, two by four deprived mob had made its decision. And, I, the lowly servant of the outdated, impractical, was left with only a florid bleeding heart to bear as a caveat. The appearance of a new Walgreens, Tigermart, and even a Starbucks hinted the oncoming danger, but I was too drunk with the crimson memories to pay heed to any forebodings. Sometimes the wine of denial tastes the best.

A ten year old princess stands tugging at the long braids the autumn breeze has upset. Dusty, brown toes grip the broken cobblestone path leading up to the last

antebellum house left in her town. Her chubby finger boldly teases the tired doorbell. But the chime has its revenge as it fails to carry out its orders. She is not discouraged. Around the scarlet brick wall, gilded fall fields undulate in the soft respiration of the coming evening. Haybales channel the down and create perfect suites for her lustrous imagination to fill. She leaps from one to the next, too intent on completing the bound to address the danger of snakes or sink holes. The child comes to a halt at the final mound and bends to rest on her grass-stained knees. Before turning to start back again, she slurps the cool air and looks ahead. The majestic archaic home, filled with so many treasures of old, stands proudly on the hill in front of her. All around the aged Matron abide lofty arborous soldiers always ready to protect their lady from harm. The vista startles the girl as she perceives, even at her tender age, the profound beauty and incomparable aura surrounding the place. Sighing, she cherishes the last breaths of sunlight.

What need is there for sunlight now that super-high watt lamps illuminate our lives? The parking lots, and the lumber yards, and the isles and isles of any home improvement supply you would ever need mercilessly flaunt their commercial superiority on the very grave of beautiful antiquity manifested. The inevitable industrial apocalypse has seized control again-- but do not overlook its attractions. It has much to offer: quality goods, convenient locale, and the brazen absence of anything even remotely transcendently captivating.

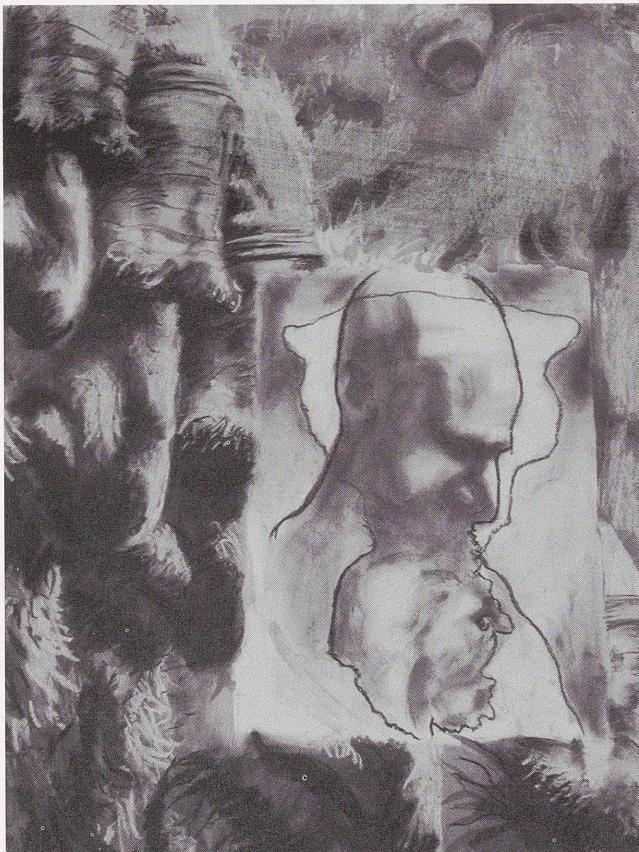
### Lean High (12)

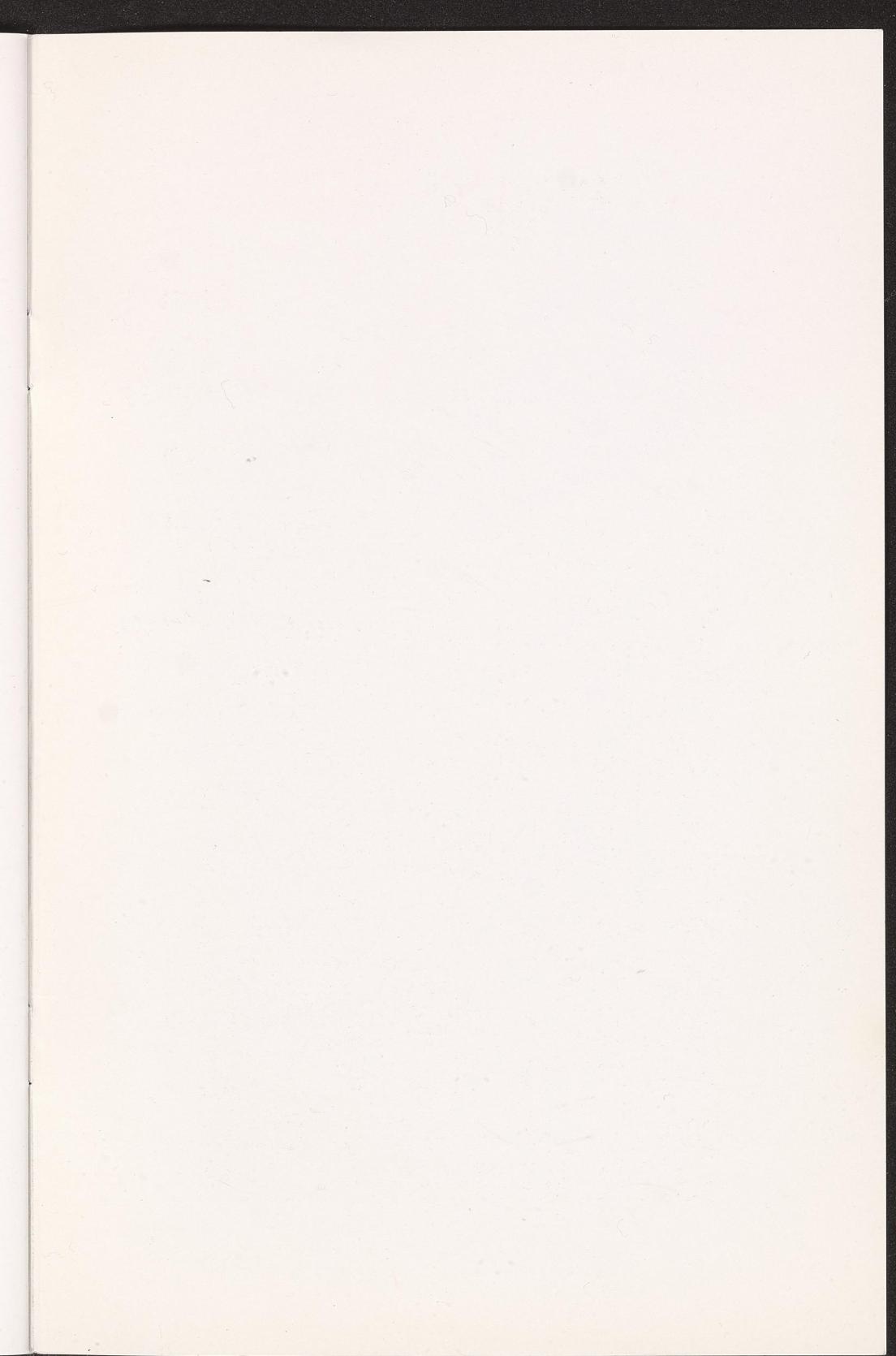
## TO AN ASPIRING ARTIST

Lost in the muddy swirl of civilization,  
You want to know what you're doing shouting  
For pictures of rolling meadows  
Or beautiful songs of forests.

And art! You need to know what art really is:  
An expression of green in the way it feels  
Passion sloping into truth  
A sleeping stream you don't want to follow.

Laura Lee (10)





# HALLMARKS

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